

The EDGE

College Magazine

March 2026



Warrington
& Vale Royal
College



**RECORD NUMBER
OF LEVEL 3 STUDENTS
PROGRESS TO
UNIVERSITY**

PAGE 4

CELEBRATING COLLEGE NEWS WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Welcome to the latest edition of The Edge, now refreshed with a brand-new look.

I'm delighted to share this issue with you as we shine a spotlight on the wonderful things happening across our college community. There is so much to celebrate!

I hope you enjoy reading and find a little inspiration along the way. Thank you for being part of our journey and for supporting the vibrant, talented community that makes Warrington & Vale Royal College such a special place.

Nichola Newton
Principal & CEO



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WARRINGTON & VALE ROYAL COLLEGE NAMED EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR: PLATINUM BY INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Warrington & Vale Royal College has achieved a remarkable double triumph, being awarded Employer of the Year: Platinum at the prestigious Investors in People Awards. This accolade follows the college's recent attainment of Platinum status, placing it among an elite group of just four Further Education colleges nationwide, and the only one to secure the Employer of the Year Award.

The Investors in People Platinum assessment described the college as a “vibrant, high-performing organisation where people are deeply aligned to purpose, motivated by values, and committed to continuous improvement.” Assessors highlighted a culture where empowerment, accountability, and innovation thrive, which is an achievement built on years of strategic investment in staff development.

Flagship initiatives such as the *Aspiring Leaders* and *Career Progression* programmes have strengthened operational efficiency, boosted internal promotions, and kept staff turnover well below sector averages. This

commitment to people has delivered tangible results: student satisfaction rates have soared to 95%, and achievement rates have climbed to nearly 92%.

At the awards ceremony, Investors in People CEO Paul Decoy reminded guests: “When you invest in people, everything gets better.” Warrington & Vale Royal College’s success is a powerful testament to that philosophy.

This recognition comes just twelve months after the college’s best-ever Ofsted rating of ‘Good with Outstanding Features’, reinforcing Warrington & Vale Royal College as not only an exceptional place to work, but also an outstanding place to study.

Want to join an organisation rated Investors in People: Platinum?

View our current vacancies:
wvr.ac.uk/work-with-us



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
We invest in people Platinum

THE INVESTORS IN PEOPLE AWARDS 2025



“These achievements are a testament to the hard work and dedication of our entire college community. They reflect our commitment to creating an environment where both staff and students thrive.”

Nichola Newton, Principal & CEO.

“We are immensely proud to have achieved Platinum status for the first time and, on top of that, to have been awarded Employer of the Year. This success reflects our commitment to ensuring our people thrive in their working life.”

Tracy Callaghan, Director of Human Resources.



Warrington & Vale Royal College

RECORD NUMBER OF LEVEL 3 STUDENTS PROGRESS TO UNIVERSITY

Warrington & Vale Royal College is celebrating an outstanding year of achievement, with a record number of level 3 students progressing to university following Vocational Results Day. This milestone reflects the college's unwavering commitment to helping students achieve their ambitions and secure bright futures.

This year saw a significant rise in students continuing their academic journey at universities across the UK, a trend that has been steadily increasing year on year. Many students secured places at their first-choice institutions, including prestigious Russell Group universities and specialist providers such as the University of Liverpool, University of Leeds, and University of Manchester.

The surge in progression follows an impressive Vocational Results Day, where level 3 technical and T Level students celebrated a 98% pass rate. These qualifications - equivalent to three A Levels - highlight not only the dedication of students but also the exceptional teaching and support offered by the college. With more students than ever moving on to higher

education and academic performance at record levels, Warrington & Vale Royal College continues to strengthen its reputation as a leading provider of technical education and skills training. The college remains committed to equipping students with the knowledge, confidence, and skills needed to succeed, whether their next step is university, an apprenticeship, or employment.

“With a 98% pass rate and record progression to university, our students are achieving incredible success and securing bright futures.”

Nichola Newton,
Principal & CEO

Find out more about our full range of technical courses at: wvr.ac.uk/16-18



MOTOR VEHICLE APPRENTICE SECURES SOUGHT-AFTER POSITION AT LOCAL GARAGE

After three years of hard work and hands-on learning, Rio Franchetti, a Level 3 Motor Vehicle & Maintenance Technician apprentice, has landed a full-time position at John Oates Garage in Warrington. His journey from beginner to qualified mechanic is a shining example of how apprenticeships open doors to rewarding careers.

Rio began his studies at Warrington & Vale Royal College as a Level 1 Motor Vehicle Maintenance student. His talent and determination soon earned him a trial placement at John Oates Garage, which quickly turned into an apprenticeship. Over the next three years, Rio mastered essential skills, from replacing head gaskets to changing timing belts, while completing his academic studies. His efforts recently culminated in him passing his End Point Assessment (EPA), officially marking the end of his apprenticeship.

Reflecting on his experience, Rio says: "It kept me busy, and I liked being paid to do something I really enjoy." His story highlights the value of apprenticeships in combining practical

experience with financial independence.

Rio's tutor, Danny Fahimi, praised his achievement: "Rio is such a brilliant and hardworking student and is greatly missed at the college. I can't thank the team at John Oates Garage enough for their support during Rio's apprenticeship."

The garage team was equally proud. Owner John Oates shared: "We're very proud of Rio. When he got his qualification, we had a small celebration and now have a photo of him with his certificate hanging in the garage. Rio's very good for his age and is only going to get better."

John Oates Garage, a trusted name in Warrington since 2004, champions apprenticeships as a long-term investment.



"As an employer, you start to see the benefits over time. Apprenticeships are a long term investment in your company's future."

John Oates

Congratulations to Rio on this incredible achievement! His success story is a testament to the

power of apprenticeships and the vital role Warrington & Vale Royal College plays in shaping skilled professionals. Through expert teaching, dedicated support, and strong employer partnerships, the college has helped Rio turn his passion into a career - proving once again that when education and opportunity come together, great things happen.

If you are an employer and would like to find out more about recruiting an apprentice, please contact us on **01925 494 400**.

Find out more about apprenticeships at: wvr.ac.uk/apprenticeships



Start your application today!

Higher Technical & Professional Qualifications

Warrington & Vale Royal College offers a wide range of Higher Technical & Professional Qualifications which are equivalent to degree-level study but more cost-effective.

Applications are now open for September 2026, with funding options available to help you retrain or upskill.

For more information and personalised advice, contact our Learner Services Team today.

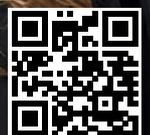
Visit wvr.ac.uk/higher-education to learn more.

☎ 01925 494 400 ✉ learner.services@wvr.ac.uk



SKILLS
FOR LIFE

HIGHER TECHNICAL
QUALIFICATIONS



UNSUNG HEROES

Every organisation has individuals and teams whose dedication quietly shapes the everyday experiences of others. Their contributions may not always take centre stage, but they make a big difference.

Unsung Heroes is our new regular feature celebrating those people, the ones who go above and beyond, lift others up, and help our college community. Each edition will shine a light on standout acts of kindness, professionalism, and excellence that deserve to be recognised and applauded.

From frontline teams creating positive first impressions to colleagues and mentors who go above and beyond every day, these stories remind us of the remarkable people working behind the scenes in college.



CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: THANK YOU TO THE MIS AND STUDENT RECORDS TEAM

In need of some serious recognition is our MIS and Student Records Teams for their exceptional work on timetabling, audit processes, and the successful submission of the Individual Learner Record (ILR) - essential behind-the-scenes work that is key to the smooth running of the organisation.

Their precision, reliability, and commitment not only support operational efficiency but also the learning experience of every student and the working lives of every staff member.

Thank you for your attention to detail, professionalism, and ongoing dedication to excellence.



PRAISE FOR LEARNER SERVICES, FRONTLINE, AND ADMISSIONS

Our Learner Services, Frontline, and Admissions Teams have been recognised for their exceptional hard work during a busy enrolment period.

The team's collective positivity and professionalism ensured that new students had the very best start to their journey at Warrington & Vale Royal College, with warm, welcoming faces making all the difference to nerves.

These efforts set the tone for a positive start, and the college truly appreciates the care and commitment you bring to your roles. Thank you for the energy and care you bring to your work, not just at enrolment, but each and every day.



CELEBRATING JILL MURPHY

Jill Murphy, one of the college's Apprenticeship Coaches, has received notable commendation after an employer shared feedback on the exemplary support given to their apprentices.

"In one word: outstanding."

Jill has guided many apprentices through their studies, providing high level support, and expert knowledge. The employer noted the remarkable difference between Jill's approach and that of other providers, describing her contribution as "leaps and bounds above the rest."

Jill, thank you for the care and professionalism you bring to your role. Your impact is clearly felt and is deeply appreciated.



SPOTLIGHT ON JAYNE FOX

Jayne Fox, Curriculum Manager for Media, Games, Graphics, and Hospitality & Catering, was singled out for recognition in heartfelt praise from one of her team members.

"I just wanted to say how amazing Jayne is. I can honestly say I've never worked with someone so organised, professional, and committed to maintaining such high standards. Jayne continues to inspire the college daily. She listens, she genuinely cares, and she prioritises staff wellbeing."

Jayne is a true credit to Warrington & Vale Royal College, described as "a true gem with a brilliant work ethic and an all-round lovely person."

Her leadership leaves colleagues feeling supported, valued, and proud to work at the college. Thank you, Jayne, for your mentorship, positivity, and unwavering dedication.

PARENT PRAISE FOR DIANE BATES

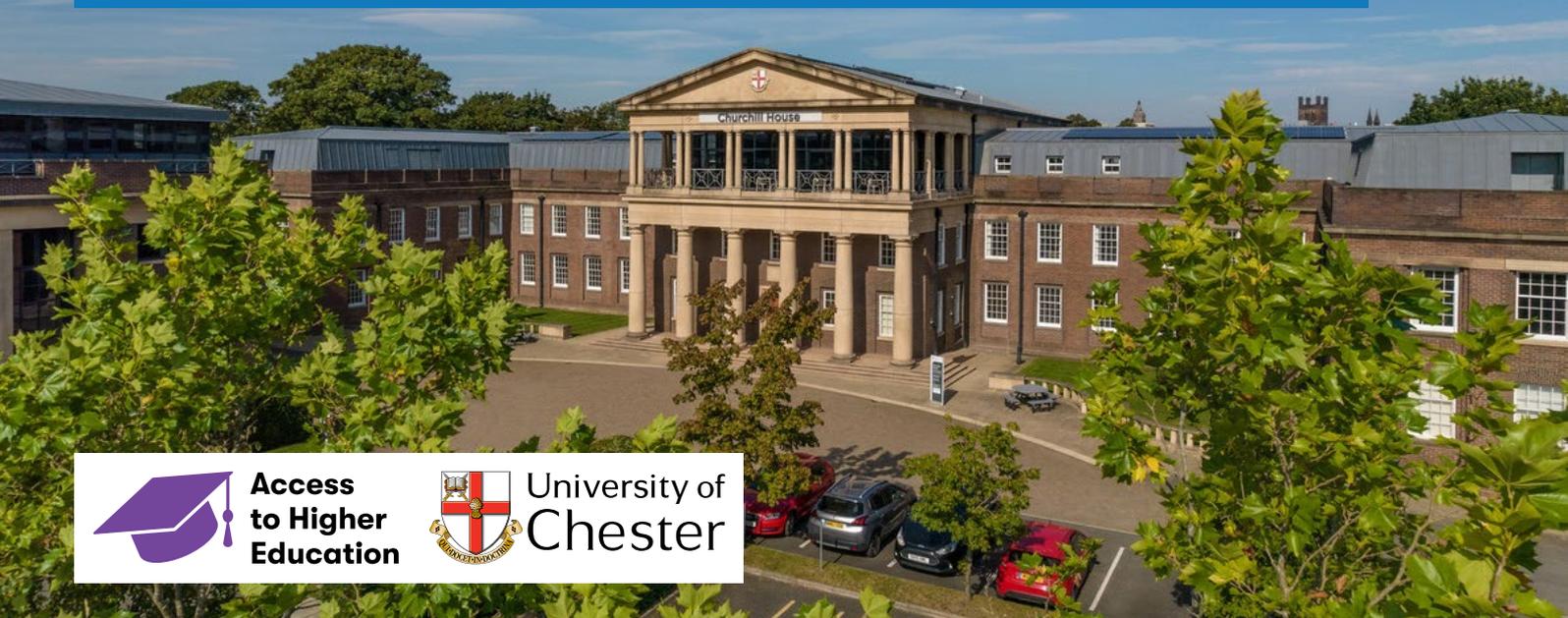
At the start of the academic year, one student was unfortunately involved in a road traffic accident which left them with life changing injuries. Diane, one of our wonderful Progress Coaches, has fully supported this student since their return to college.

"I feel supported as a mum, and it means a lot to know someone is supporting my child. Diane has gone above and beyond and deserves to be recognised for this. Her support means the world to my child. We wouldn't be where we are without Diane."

Diane's compassion and unwavering support has made a huge difference to this student and their family, showing the true impact a dedicated Progress Coach can have during the most challenging moments.



NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CHESTER GUARANTEES DEGREE PLACES FOR ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS



Access
to Higher
Education



University of
Chester

Warrington & Vale Royal College is excited to announce that it has entered into a partnership with the University of Chester that will guarantee every student who successfully completes an Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma a place on a related degree, subject to entry requirements.

This arrangement creates a straightforward and supportive progression route, giving students from all backgrounds the opportunity to move confidently from further education to higher education. As a result, Access to HE students will benefit from a simplified application process and dedicated guidance to help them take their next academic step with confidence. This guarantee reinforces the college's commitment to widening participation and opening up higher-level study to anyone with the ambition to pursue it.

For those who are not familiar with the concept of Access to HE, these are year-long courses that provide the skills, knowledge, and qualifications needed to apply for degree level study (typically at university). Designed specifically

for adults returning to education, these courses offer expert guidance and high-quality learning to prepare students for higher level study.

Prospective students are encouraged to apply early to avoid disappointment and get early access to personalised advice and support.

To help prospective students and applicants prepare, the college is hosting two Access to HE Coffee Mornings, where visitors can meet tutors and future classmates, learn more about the courses, and receive 1:1 support with their application. A representative from the University of Chester will also be in attendance to talk more about the new partnership and the progression pathways available. The events will take place at both the

Warrington and Winsford campus, and are open to anyone interested in learning more about Access to HE.

Whether you are just beginning to explore your options or are ready to step back into the classroom, the college's upcoming Access to HE Coffee Mornings are the perfect opportunity to meet tutors, ask questions, and get personalised support with your application. With guaranteed progression

Courses starting September 2026:

- Allied Health Professionals
- Criminal Justice
- Nursing & Midwifery
- Psychology

to a related degree at the University of Chester for all successful Access to HE graduates, there has never been a better time to find out more.

Access to HE Coffee Mornings

Winsford Campus
Wednesday 18th March,
10.00am - 12.00pm

Warrington Campus
Friday 20th March,
10.00am - 12.00pm



Visit: wvr.ac.uk/events to register for a coffee morning and head to: wvr.ac.uk/access to start your application today.



CARPENTRY & JOINERY STUDENTS COMPLETE MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY PROJECT

Earlier this year, Level 1 Carpentry & Joinery students showcased their skills in a meaningful way, completing a bespoke project for St Oswald's House care home in Winwick.

The students designed and built custom fences and gates for "Duckingham Palace" - an enclosure for the care home's beloved ducks - blending craftsmanship with community spirit.

As part of the collaboration, students transformed an existing pergola into a secure and stylish enclosure by fitting newly constructed gates and fences. The project not only provided a practical solution for the care home but also gave students invaluable real-world experience, applying classroom skills to a live brief.

The day was filled with smiles as students hand-delivered the ducks to their new home, creating a memorable moment for residents. Many came outside to watch the installation and connect

with the students, reinforcing the positive impact of technical learning on the wider community.

Ria, a representative from the care home, expressed her admiration.

"We are absolutely amazed by the results of this project and can't wait to offer more opportunities for the students to gain valuable industry experience. Their hard work and craftsmanship have truly impressed us."

Live briefs are a cornerstone of Warrington & Vale Royal College's study programmes for 16-18-year-olds. They provide students with hands-on experience, client interaction, and the confidence to excel in their future careers - bridging the gap between education and employment.



Find out more about our Carpentry & Joinery courses at: wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/construction-construction-trades



We are officially a CIMPSA enhanced partner!

As the only college in the North West with enhanced CIMPSA status, you can trust that our sport courses are the best around.

To learn more about this prestigious partnership, visit: wvr.ac.uk/cimpsa

wvr.ac.uk/sport
01925 494 400



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Education Partner

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CULINARY TALENT ON THE GLOBAL STAGE: MOLLIE-ANN MCCARDLE SHINES IN ITALY



“This was the first competition I’ve ever taken part in, so it was a huge learning curve. The techniques and skills I learned at college really helped me perfect my dishes. Practicing in the college’s industry-standard kitchens made me feel confident and prepared for a professional environment. I can’t thank my tutors enough!”

Mollie-Ann

Level 2 Culinary Skills student Mollie-Ann McCardle, former Padgate Academy pupil, showcased her exceptional talent on an international stage, competing in the prestigious CombiGuru Challenge hosted by commercial oven manufacturer Unox in Padua, Italy.

Mollie-Ann was one of only two female competitors among forty talented young chefs from the UK, Spain, and Italy, making her achievement even more impressive. Each participant was tasked with creating two innovative dishes: a main course featuring broccolini and a dessert incorporating coffee beans.

For Mollie-Ann, the competition marked several firsts, including her first time travelling abroad. Accompanied by her tutors, she flew from Manchester to Northern Italy, embracing the local culture and preparing diligently for the challenge. Late into the night before the event, Mollie-Ann and her Hospitality & Catering

Lecturer, Cavan Shepard, perfected her menu.

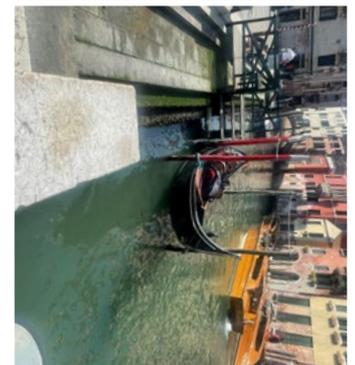
Mollie-Ann’s main course featured a fillet steak served with Lyonnaise potatoes, caramelised onion purée, and a rich red wine sauce - making her the only competitor to incorporate steak. For dessert, she presented a decadent chocolate fondant with Chantilly cream and crystallised coffee beans. Judges praised her main dish as “cooked to perfection” and described her fondant as “immaculate.” Mollie-Ann secured joint 1st place for taste of the main, joint 2nd for taste of the dessert, and achieved the highest marks for ingredient selection.

After the challenge, competitors enjoyed an

unforgettable day trip to Venice, exploring iconic landmarks and gliding through the city’s canals, a well-deserved reward for their hard work.

Huge congratulations to Mollie-Ann on this incredible achievement! Her success in the CombiGuru Challenge reflects not only her talent and determination but also the outstanding training and support provided by Warrington & Vale Royal College.

Thanks to fabulous facilities and expert guidance, Mollie-Ann was empowered to compete - and excel - on an international stage, proving that ambition and education can take you anywhere.



View our full range of Hospitality & Catering courses for both Adults and School Leavers at: wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/hospitality-culinary-arts



FASHION STUDENTS IMPRESS INDUSTRY DESIGNER WITH STAND-OUT CAMPAIGN WORK

Level 3 Fashion Promotion & Styling students recently demonstrated their industry-ready skills by completing a live brief with menswear designer and entrepreneur Andy Phillips-Baynes, co-founder of Sixty High Street, a newly opened boutique in Newton-le-Willows.

Andy tasked students with developing a creative content plan to support the store's launch. Over just two weeks, students stepped into professional roles as market researchers, photographers, model scouts, and content creators to deliver a campaign that captured the essence of the Sixty High Street brand.

The brief required in-depth market research, competitor analysis, and pricing strategy evaluation. Students then produced eye-catching digital and print content, including social media assets, campaign concepts, and launch materials. All of which were tailored to the brand's identity.

“The outcome of this brief has completely surpassed my expectations. The students at Warrington & Vale Royal College have blown me away with their creative vision and the quality of the assets they’ve made. Look out for their campaign assets on socials in the coming months!”

Andy Phillips-Baynes, Co-Founder of Sixty High Street

This collaboration is one of many ways the college links students to real-world opportunities. With partnerships spanning



over 800 employers, Warrington & Vale Royal College ensures students gain the skills, behaviours, and experience needed to succeed in competitive industries.

The Level 3 Fashion Promotion & Styling course focuses on high-demand skills such as content creation, photography,

styling, market research, and marketing. Through employer-led projects, live briefs, and guest speaker sessions, students leave the course with confidence and a strong portfolio to launch their careers.

Find out more about our Fashion Promotion & Styling course at: wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/art-design-fashion-creative-crafts



IN YEAR 11? IT'S TIME TO APPLY!



Warrington & Vale Royal College

Choose from exciting courses, experience outstanding facilities, and start your journey with Warrington & Vale Royal College today.

Limited places available:

- Level 1 Electrical
- Level 1 Culinary Skills
- Level 3 Games Design
- Level 1 Carpentry & Joinery
- Level 1 Health & Social Care
- Level 3 Health & Social Care
- Level 1 Hairdressing
- Level 1 Motor Vehicle
- T Level Adult Nursing

Missed our Open Evenings or want a second look?

Book a campus tour today: wvr.ac.uk/campustours

Visit wvr.ac.uk/16-18 to learn more.



CAPTURING HERITAGE: PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENTS SHOWCASE WINSFORD THROUGH CREATIVE LENS

1

Level 2 Digital Photography students at Warrington & Vale Royal College recently celebrated their talent and creativity at a private viewing event, unveiling winning entries from a college-led competition that explored Winsford's heritage and identity.

Launched by Vice Principal Andy Williams and Director of Curriculum Ben Brady, the competition invited students to capture unique perspectives of Winsford's history and character. Although not part of their formal qualification, the project encouraged students to push boundaries and produce work with real-world relevance.

Four winning entries were professionally printed and are now proudly displayed in the Winsford Campus Learning Resource Centre (LRC), thanks to

generous support from Signs Unlimited. The private viewing welcomed students, families, and friends, with many seeing their work in print for the first time.

One student reflected: "Seeing my work printed and displayed is so motivating. It makes me want to explore photography further."

This competition wasn't just about photography, it was about storytelling. By encouraging students to explore Winsford's heritage through their own lens,



Warrington & Vale Royal College created a platform for creativity, confidence, and community connection. These striking

images will remain on display as a lasting testament to the talent and ambition of these aspiring photographers.

View our full range of Digital Photography courses at: wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/digital





WINNING ENTRIES

1 Cheshire Salt Mines

Sean Hayes

A timeless image of the UK's oldest working mine, using puddle reflections and sunset hues for balance and warmth.

2 Trent & Mersey Canal Crossing

Suzanne Reeve

A historic bridge captured with an eye for architectural detail, evoking Britain's industrial past.

3 Anderton Boat Lift

William Robinson

Capturing the iconic "Cathedral of the Canals," showcasing the engineering marvel with minimal post-production, highlighting its industrial grandeur.

4 Cheshire Salt Mines & River Weaver

Kathryn Chapman

A serene composition contrasting warm industrial lights with cool twilight tones, reflecting Winsford's salt heritage.



"I couldn't be prouder of my students. Many went above and beyond, exploring the area outside college hours. Seeing them thrive in something they're passionate about is why I do this job."

Emma Dunne, Digital Photography Lecturer



Charlotte Nichols MP & representatives from PAS NW LTD at Warrington campus launch event.

PAS NW LTD AND WARRINGTON & VALE ROYAL COLLEGE LAUNCH GROUNDWORKS APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

PAS NW LTD has partnered with Warrington & Vale Royal College to launch Cheshire and Warrington's first dedicated Level 2 Groundworks Apprenticeship programme, marking a major step in shaping the region's construction talent pipeline.

The apprenticeship, which commenced last year, will provide hands-on experience at Peel Garden Village, a landmark housing development delivering 1,200 new homes in Warrington. PAS NW LTD, the civil engineering contractor for the project, is committed to creating a long-term pipeline of skilled groundworkers.

“We wanted to work with a Warrington college to develop the next generation of groundworkers right here in our hometown. This is just the start, we’re building a long-term pipeline of skilled talent.”

Fraser Linaker, Managing Director of PAS NW LTD

Nichola Newton, CEO and Principal of Warrington & Vale Royal College, added: “This apprenticeship will provide local students with industry-recognised training while working on a live construction project. It’s an exciting time for skills development in the region.”

Apprentices will train at the college’s Construction & Civil Engineering Academy (CCEA), recently upgraded with a £3.6 million investment through the Town Deal. The facility offers cutting-edge resources and a strong focus on digital technologies in construction.

This partnership represents more than an apprenticeship, it’s a blueprint for Warrington’s future construction

workforce. Combining top facilities, employer collaboration, and real-world experience, Warrington & Vale Royal College and PAS NW LTD are laying the foundations for a skilled workforce that will shape the region’s construction industry for years to come.

Find out more about apprenticeships at:
wvr.ac.uk/apprenticeships

APPRENTICESHIP HIGHLIGHTS

The 18-month course combines classroom learning with practical experience and focuses on six essential industry skills:

- Technical knowledge
- Practical skills
- Problem-solving
- Communication
- Health & Safety awareness
- Time management.



WARRINGTON & VALE ROYAL COLLEGE'S DANCE ACADEMY CELEBRATES ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR!

Thirteen talented young dancers from local high schools brought energy and creativity to the stage last term as WVR Dance Academy concluded its latest programme with a vibrant "Pop Icons" themed performance.

Led by highly trained dance tutor Erin Taylor, WVR Dance Academy offers Year 10 and 11 pupils a taste of professional dance training through high-quality workshops in the college's dance studio and theatre. Over four weeks, students explored contemporary and commercial dance styles, learning choreography inspired by legendary pop icons.

The dance academy culminated in a final performance in the college's theatre, showcasing not only technical skill but also confidence, creativity, and collaboration. Each dancer received a certificate of achievement and a professional headshot to mark their success.

"What I have enjoyed most about the WVR Dance Academy is being part of such a fun and supportive group. I have learned so much from Erin and the sessions have really helped me grow in confidence."

Melody, Irlam & Cadishead pupil.

WVR Dance Academy takes place in the college's Advanced Creative & Digital Skills Academy, which contains industry-standard studios, a 160-seat theatre, and professional lighting and sound equipment, providing the perfect environment for young performers to thrive.



Through expert-led workshops and access to professional facilities, Warrington & Vale Royal College gives young dancers the chance to experience what it means to perform at a higher

level, inspiring them to dream big and take bold steps toward their future in the arts. Look out for details of future initiatives like this on the college's website.

Find out more about our Dance courses at: wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/performing-production-arts



CAREERS WEEK 2025: BRINGING OUR MANTRA OF "CAREERS NOT COURSES" TO LIFE

At Warrington & Vale Royal College, our commitment to Careers Not Courses drives everything we do, ensuring students gain real-world insights and opportunities beyond the classroom. The most recent Careers Week was no exception, offering five days of employer engagement, university connections, and inspiring talks.

Across the week, students met representatives from leading employers and universities, exploring pathways in industries ranging from healthcare and engineering to creative media and aviation. Highlights included sessions with AECOM, Balfour Beatty, the Royal Navy, 10:10 Games, Keele University, and many more. Alongside employer talks, the college's Vice Principal: Curriculum,

Andy Atkin, delivered sessions on apprenticeship pathways, helping students understand the routes available to launch successful careers.

The college extends sincere thanks to all the organisations who supported Careers Week 2025. Their involvement ensures students leave college with confidence, clarity, and connections that matter, in preparation for their future careers.



KATH'S STORY: RETURNING TO LEARNING AT 50

Kath has always been passionate about people and knew she wanted to become a counsellor. At 50, she finally decided to take the step she had been dreaming about and return to learning.



follow a passion, focused on supporting others. She now hopes to create a holistic wellbeing business that combines counselling with other therapeutic approaches. Studying at the college has been an important step towards that goal.

"I have learnt so much about myself, my personal ability, and my self-belief."

She first enrolled on our Level 2 Certificate Counselling course, before progressing to the level 3 certificate and now, finally, the Level 4 Therapeutic Counselling Diploma. She has fully committed to a career that aligns with her values.

While she continues to work in her family business, life-changing experiences have encouraged her to rethink her future and

Kath's story is proof that it's never too late to follow your passion. With determination and the right support, she has transformed a lifelong ambition into a clear career path, showing that education can open doors at any stage of life.

To view all Counselling courses, visit: wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/counselling



RETIRED ACCOUNTANT TAKES TO THE KITCHEN!

After retiring from his successful career in accountancy, Peter was eager to expand his horizons and learn new skills. So, he decided to enrol on our Level 2 Patisserie & Confectionery course.

This was an easy choice for Peter, given the college is close to home, easy to get to, and offers convenient class times.

Throughout the course, Peter mastered a range of skills including creating perfect choux pastry and making delicious crême patisserie. His experience



is a great reminder that it is never too late to try something new, especially when doing it simply for the love of learning.

Discover adult courses starting soon at: wvr.ac.uk/adults



PERFORMING ARTS STUDENTS PUT ON A SHOW-STOPPING PANTO



Warrington & Vale Royal College is delighted to celebrate the success of this year's show-stopping pantomime, *Robin Hood*.

Packed with comedy, lively characters, and vibrant costumes, the production showcased the creativity, dedication, and skill of students across Acting, Musical Theatre and Dance pathways.

Performers from every part of the department participated, demonstrating remarkable teamwork both on stage and behind the scenes. The result was a polished, fun-filled performance that left audiences of all ages cheering.

The pantomime welcomed pupils from local primary and high schools, as well as members of the wider community during matinee shows. Evening performances invited parents, guardians, friends, and supporters, each audience offering enthusiastic applause for the students' hard work and talent.

"I am incredibly proud of every single student involved in this year's pantomime. Their commitment, professionalism, and infectious energy shone through in every performance. Robin Hood was a true celebration of what our students do best."

Kelly Broughton, Curriculum Manager for Performing Arts

The college is immensely proud of all staff and students who contributed to the production. The success of *Robin Hood* highlights the vibrant and flourishing community within the Performing Arts department and reinforces the college's commitment to providing high-quality creative education.

ADAM'S JOURNEY FROM SUPPORTED INTERN TO SKILLED TECHNICIAN

Starting his journey at Warrington & Vale Royal College on a Motor Vehicle course, Adam steadily built the confidence and practical experience that would open the door to new opportunities.

His progression onto the Supported Internship programme helped him develop vital employability skills and ultimately paved the way for his first professional role within the college itself.

Adam first enrolled on our Level 1 Motor Vehicle course before progressing right the way up to level 3. During his time as a motor vehicle student, Adam developed strong practical skills and grew his confidence within the workshop. Building on this foundation, Adam progressed to our Supported Internship programme where he gained essential

employability skills including interview preparation, CV writing, and teamwork. As time went on, Adam became increasingly confident and independent as he prepared for life beyond college.

As part of his Supported Internship, Adam completed a work placement right here at the college within our motor vehicle and construction departments. His commitment and enthusiasm made a lasting impression, resulting in him being offered a technician role which he proudly accepted.



Adam's experience is a powerful reminder of what can be achieved through determination, practical learning, and the right support. Everyone at Warrington & Vale Royal

College is incredibly proud of his success so far, and we look forward to seeing all that he continues to accomplish as his career unfolds.

To find out more about Supported Internships, visit: wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/skills-for-life-work



Tea & Coffee • Hot & Cold Food • Cakes



The Wellbeing Community Cafe

Warrington & Vale Royal College

Open Monday - Thursday,
9.00am - 2.00pm*

*Term time only.

Orford Community Hub
Hughes Avenue, Warrington, WA2 9EW

WELLBEING COMMUNITY CAFÉ - NOW OPEN!

Warrington & Vale Royal College is delighted to announce the opening of its new café, run by Foundation Learning and Skills for Independence, Life & Work students.

Located within Orford Community Hub on Hughes Avenue, the café offers a warm and welcoming space where visitors can relax and enjoy their favourite hot drink or treat themselves to something sweet.

The café gives students a valuable opportunity to build confidence and develop practical skills while engaging with the local community. Visitors are encouraged to pop in, say hello, and enjoy a

little treat while supporting students as they gain essential skills to help them in their future careers.



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CELEBRATING ANOTHER YEAR OF SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP SUCCESS

Warrington & Vale Royal College proudly hosted its annual Supported Internship Celebration Evening, honouring the incredible achievements of students on the Supported Internship and Preparation for Supported Internship programmes.

The event was filled with joy, pride, and applause as students were recognised for their hard work, growth, and determination in taking bold steps toward independence and meaningful employment. The Supported Internship programme offers students with additional needs or disabilities the chance to gain valuable work experience through structured, work-based learning, supported by dedicated job coaches. Meanwhile, the Preparation for Supported Internship programme provides in-college placements to build confidence and skills before transitioning to external roles.

Subject Lead Sara Shaw and Co-ordinator Fiona Chew delivered heartfelt speeches, reflecting on each student's journey and sharing inspiring success stories, including those of students who have now secured paid employment. Their words highlighted the

transformative impact of inclusive education and the power of perseverance.

The evening welcomed employers such as Michelle Cloney and Gareth Davies from Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Trust, alongside other local businesses. One stakeholder remarked: "I'm blown away by the talent and growth I have witnessed tonight. These young people continue to show what's possible with the right support. The future is bright."

"It's heartwarming to hear the successes of our students. We are so proud of each and every one of them and the confidence they have gained while on these courses."

Rebecca Welch, Vice Principal

"It's always a privilege to come together and celebrate the accomplishments of our young people. The atmosphere was electric! Full of proud families, staff, and peers."

Emma Ewell, Curriculum Manager: Foundation Learning

This celebration reflects Warrington & Vale Royal College's unwavering commitment to inclusion and employability. By providing tailored support and forging strong employer partnerships, the college ensures every student has the opportunity to thrive.



To find out more about Supported Internships, visit: wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/skills-for-life-work



Supported Internships

A bridge between education and employment

Warrington & Vale Royal College has Supported Internships running from September to July each year. They are designed to help those with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) make the transition from education to paid employment.

Find out more:

wvr.ac.uk/supported-internships





SUPPORTED INTERN ALUMNA RECEIVES HIGHLY REGARDED AWARD

Former Supported Intern Lee has been recognised with the highly regarded Chief Executive Award from Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, celebrating his outstanding contribution as a valued and respected member of the team.

Lee completed the college's Supported Internship programme in 2024, impressing staff and peers with his dedication and professionalism. His commitment helped him secure full-time employment as a domestic cleaner at Warrington Hospital, where he quickly became a familiar and appreciated figure. His continued excellence led to a nomination and recognition from the Trust's Chief Executive, a testament to his hard work and reliability.

The Supported Internship programme at Warrington & Vale Royal College is designed for young people aged 17-24 with learning disabilities and/or autism who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Delivered in partnership with DFN Project Search, the programme provides

structured, work-based learning supported by dedicated job coaches, helping students transition successfully into employment.

For Lee, this meant gaining real-world experience at Warrington Hospital, building confidence and skills under the guidance of his job coach. This foundation paved the way for his career success.

“Lee was an exemplary student. His progress is a credit to his incredible work ethic and the pride he takes in every task. His journey shows what's possible with the right support and opportunities.”

Leoni McHugh, Supported Internship Coordinator

“I'm delighted we could help Lee achieve his goals. It's fabulous to see the contribution these young people make within our hospitals and the experience they gain from placements in a variety of roles.”

Nikhil Khashu, Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospital Chief Executive

Congratulations to Lee on this remarkable achievement. His success story reflects the transformative impact of Warrington & Vale Royal College's Supported Internship programme and its strong partnerships with employers. Lee's story is one that proves that with the right support, every student can shine.

ART & DESIGN STUDENTS TRANSFORM LIVING WELL HUB

Ahead of the Christmas festivities getting in full swing, our incredibly talented Level 3 Art & Design students were tasked with a life brief to decorate the windows of the local Living Well Hub. Approaching the project with passion and professionalism, students took to the windows to create a festive display which celebrates community and inclusivity for all visitors of the hub. The students' creativity and hard work impressed so much so that they have been invited to create two more designs within the local community. Watch this space!



MILITARY & EMERGENCY SERVICES STUDENTS RAISE MONEY FOR CHESHIRE SEARCH & RESCUE

Before the Christmas break, Military & Emergency Services students organised a charity football match which saw staff take on students in an exciting game. The thrilling match ended in a 3-3 draw, and £69 was raised for charity. Well done to all!

LEVEL 3 GAMES DESIGN STUDENTS DELIVER STAND-OUT LIVE BRIEF WITH 10:10 GAMES

Warrington & Vale Royal College has reaffirmed its reputation as a leading destination for aspiring games designers after Level 3 Games Design & Animation students successfully completed an ambitious live brief in partnership with local videogames developer 10:10 Games.

As part of the ongoing collaboration, students were tasked with designing a three-minute game slice that merged elements of Funko Fusion, 10:10 Games' first title, with the humour and style of The Simpsons. The brief tested both technical ability and creative vision, and students rose to the challenge with professionalism and passion.

Working in teams, students developed detailed concepts and presented their ideas to seven senior members of the 10:10 Games team, including studio co-founder and college fellow Arthur Parsons. Throughout the process, students received mentoring from the studio, gaining insight into industry standards and expectations.

“The opportunities our students gain through this partnership are second to none. Some university students don’t experience anything this close to real-world development.”

*Damien Coulson,
Games Design Tutor*



Harry Farmer, one of the students involved in the live brief, echoed this sentiment: “Working on a

live brief that combined Funko Fusion and The Simpsons was amazing, fun, and challenging! The feedback received helped me understand how to work to a brief and prepared me for real-world game development.”



Jack Crossley, Harry's classmate, added: “Choosing this course was the best decision I've made. This project confirmed I'm on the right path to my dream career.”

Live briefs like these form part of the college's

wider strategy to embed employer partnerships into the curriculum. With over 800 employer links and recognition as the Inspirational College of the Year 2024, Warrington & Vale Royal College continues to lead the way in technical education and career preparation.

This project is more than a classroom exercise. It's a glimpse into the future of games design. By combining cutting-edge facilities, expert teaching, and strong industry partnerships, Warrington & Vale Royal College ensures students graduate with more than qualifications, they leave with confidence, experience, and connections that set them apart in a competitive industry.

To find out more about Games Design courses, visit:
wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/graphics-games-design-media



HAIRDRESSING STUDENTS RAISE OVER £1000 FOR CANCER RESEARCH UK



“Throughout the week, there was a fantastic atmosphere in the salon, and it was great to see so many people from the local community get involved. On behalf of the college, I would like to pass on my thanks and congratulations to all the students involved.”

Kelly Broughton, Curriculum Manager for Creative Arts and Hairdressing & Barbering

Students based in our on-site hair salon, The Academy, turned creativity into compassion during its annual Think Pink Week, raising an incredible £1,151.46 for Cancer Research UK in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Throughout the week, students transformed the college’s salon into a hub of fundraising activity. They hosted a public salon service, with all proceeds donated to charity, and complemented this with a raffle and a cake sale. Students sold three full raffle books and countless sweet treats to eager supporters!

The funds raised will help Cancer Research UK in its

vital work, from developing cancer-preventing vaccines to investigating biomarkers and improving treatments for young people - all with the ultimate goal of finding a cure.

The salon was decorated with pink balloons, and students donned their best pink outfits to mark the occasion. Their enthusiasm paid off, breaking previous fundraising records and creating a vibrant, positive

atmosphere that engaged the local community.

This remarkable achievement reflects not only their creativity and generosity but also Warrington & Vale Royal College’s commitment to fostering community engagement and social responsibility.



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WARRINGTON & VALE ROYAL COLLEGE BECOMES THE ONLY COLLEGE IN THE NORTH WEST TO ACHIEVE ENHANCED CIMSPA PARTNER STATUS

Warrington & Vale Royal College is celebrating after being awarded Enhanced Partner status by CIMSPA, the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity, making it the **ONLY** college in the North West to hold this prestigious status.

The achievement follows a rigorous quality review in November 2025, during which the college was praised for its strong, sector-aligned course offer, inclusive and effective teaching, and meaningful employer partnerships that support clear progression routes for students.

Curriculum Manager, Matt Bold, who received specific commendation for being “extremely responsive and proactive” throughout the review process, describes the news as a significant milestone for both the department and the college. He says: “We are incredibly proud to have achieved Enhanced

CIMSPA Partner status. This recognition confirms that our curriculum, our teaching, and our employer engagement are all operating at an exceptional standard. It places Warrington & Vale Royal College in a strong position to support our learners into high-quality careers within the sport and physical activity sector.”

For those unfamiliar with CIMSPA, it is the professional development body for the UK’s sport and physical activity sector and a registered charity. The organisation is committed to supporting, developing, and enabling professionals and

institutions to succeed.

While CIMSPA accreditation applies specifically to adult sport-related courses, attaining Enhanced Partner status is a far-reaching endorsement of the college’s wider Sport, Military & Emergency Services provision, highlighting exceptional teaching, strong industry relevance, and a commitment to delivering high-quality learning experiences for all students.

This recognition reinforces Warrington & Vale Royal College as a leading place to study for anyone pursuing careers in sport, fitness, public services, and other related fields. It demonstrates the college’s continued dedication to ensuring its training aligns with the needs of local employers and the communities it serves.

To find out more about Sport courses, visit:
wvr.ac.uk/subject-areas/sport-military-emergency-services



PUZZLER PAGE

Think you know Warrington & Vale Royal College? Now is your chance to prove it. Whether you are a puzzle pro or just fancy a quick brainteaser, dive in and see how many WVR-themed clues you can crack.

WVR WORDSEARCH

Look through the grid to find all the listed words. They may appear forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally. Circle each word as you spot it and tick it off the list. Some may be a little harder to find than others, so take your time and scan carefully!

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Adult Courses | Inclusive |
| Apprenticeships | Modern |
| Costa Coffee | Onsite Gym |
| Expert Tutors | Supportive |
| Free Breakfast | T Levels |
| Free Parking | Welcoming |

O	K	F	T	M	M	O	D	E	R	N	G	A	D	E
S	E	V	R	I	A	A	V	A	C	N	L	T	C	V
Y	J	V	U	E	B	C	O	X	I	A	S	X	O	I
O	N	S	I	T	E	G	Y	M	O	A	H	T	S	S
D	Y	C	A	T	A	P	O	C	F	O	L	D	T	U
F	W	J	P	R	R	C	A	K	A	E	G	C	A	L
E	V	Q	D	D	L	O	A	R	V	Q	T	J	C	C
I	H	Y	T	E	X	E	P	E	K	Q	R	G	O	N
K	R	M	W	H	R	O	L	P	Y	I	U	C	F	I
P	L	E	T	B	V	S	K	P	U	Q	N	K	F	T
C	H	B	E	L	J	D	Y	I	Z	S	X	G	E	H
A	M	E	A	D	U	L	T	C	O	U	R	S	E	S
V	R	S	R	O	T	U	T	T	R	E	P	X	E	U
F	E	D	R	T	B	B	L	S	V	W	B	J	R	G
S	P	I	H	S	E	C	I	T	N	E	R	P	P	A

COLLEGE CROSSWORD

Grab a pen or pencil and complete the crossword by filling in each clue. Answers can be found at the bottom of the page, while some are hidden in plain sight around campus. Write your answers clearly in the boxes and make sure your letters match up where clues cross.

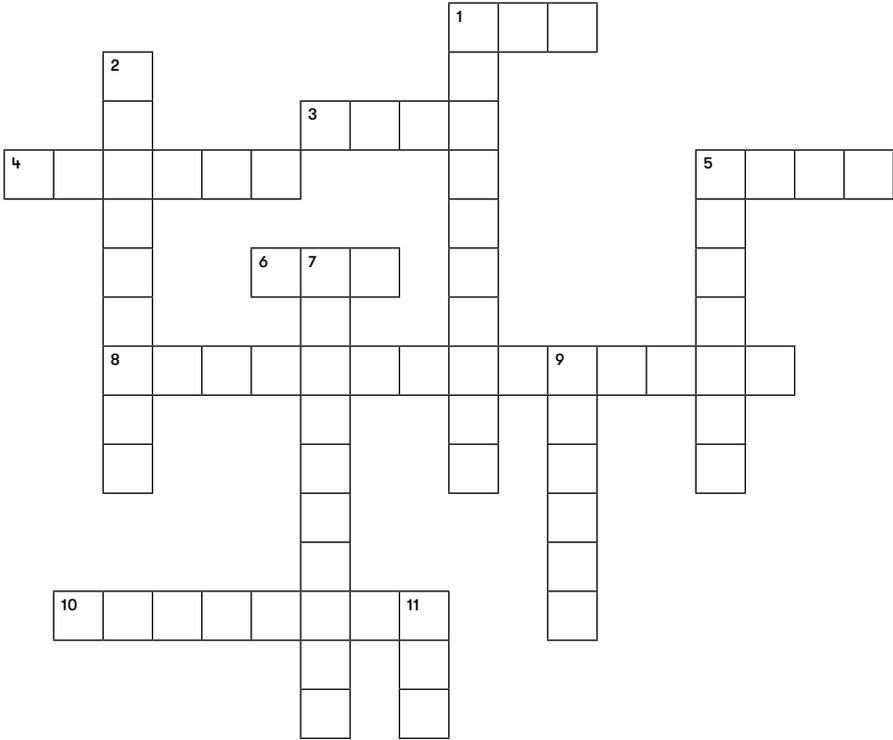
No guessing your way out of this one!

Across

- An on-site facility that 16-18 year old students can use for free
- State-of-the-art facility housing a simulation hospital ward (abbr)
- Qualification equivalent to three A levels (1,5)
- Academy which opened in 2022 and is perfect for aspiring performers (abbr)
- Level 4 and 5 qualifications that sit between A Levels and T Levels (abbr)
- Type of course where students of all ages can earn while they learn
- On-site restaurant where our Hospitality & Catering students train

Down

- The annual event where we celebrate the success of our higher technical and professional students
- All 16-18 students are entitled to this meal daily, for free
- Online tutorial platform for adult students
- The name of our on-site hair salon (3,7)
- Adjective often used to describe our tutors
- The number of direct bus routes to Warrington campus for 16-18 year olds



Across: 1. Gym, 3. HSCA, 4. T Level, 5. ACDS, 6. HTQ, 8. Apprenticeship, 10. Buckley's
Down: 1. Graduation, 2. Breakfast, 3. Amplify, 7. The Academy, 9. Expert, 11. Six

